

Seattle City Council

Public Safety, Civil Rights, and Arts Committee Meeting

Friday, 2 PM, July 9th, 2004

Words' Worth

The Poetry Program of the Seattle City Council

Curated by **Terrilynn Towns**

Today's Words' Worth poet is **Margaret Roncone**

Margaret Roncone was born in upstate New York, moved to Chicago in '93, and last June became a Seattle resident. She's been reaching toward the edge of the coast all her life. She began writing poetry as a high school sophomore and was inspired to continue by a free-spirited lay teacher amongst a swarm of black-habited nuns and brothers. Her poetry was performed as part of the 2004 Pierce College 10 minute play festival.

Tender Skin

By Margaret Roncone

sitting at a small table
a table perched
on flamingo legs
eating curried lentil soup
spelt blueberry scone as a side

I observe an elderly couple
pushing a shopping cart they wheel like a baby carriage
measuring their steps
sharing the math of their lives
the simple calculations
adding subtracting

chicken parts
hearts of palm
Swiss chard lying like giant green baby bibs
in their cart

their lives a basket
of rich autumn apples
sweetly soft inside

skin frail on the outside
with the ageing of
shared winter winds

I long to be the tenderness
that reaches between their bowed
age-bent bodies
that bridges the openings of forgetfulness
for them

the same tenderness of dark
which lies patiently between the stars
waiting a silver thread

a silver thread
her hair
lightly brushing his forearm
as she turns to face her
tall hedge of green dreams

without her knowing
the dark center of the earth
is reaching for his heart

I won't be the one to tell her this
nor will I be the one
to brush
the fine silver-webbed threads
that reach between my branch and gate
without a deep
insistence to know my own tenderness.

-- *END* --